Man's Vast Future

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A DEFINITION OF DEMOCRACY

by A. POWELL DAVIES

FARRAR STRAUS AND YOUNG NEW YORK

Designed by Stefan Salter

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Introduction

The most recent debate as to what we should mean by democracy has been between ourselves and the Russians How can one be democratic" asked Lenin in 1917 and at the same time oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat?

He was quite sincere Nothing was democracy to him that did not recognize that he himself an unmistakable dictator was administering the only genuine peoples government And as we know all Communists defend this claim

The fact that dictatorship no matter what excuses it may offer is always the contradiction of democracy is not admitted To a Communist the belief that a dictator is acting in the peoples interest entitles him to call a tyranny democratic It is important to note however that this is only allowable if the tyranny in question is connected with the Soviet system When Hitler said that he was acting in the peoples interest he was disbelieved as of

were much afraid of democracy and hoped their new Republic would escape being tied to democratic principles When they discovered that this was not exactly what they meant they adopted for the democratic principles they favored the term Republican principles Democracy they defined as rule by the mob and associated it with excesses like those of the French Revolution

Alexander Hamilton believed that even a well behaved and orderly democracy like that of Athens or early Rome was certain to be bad "The ancient democracies" he said in which the people themselves deliberated never possessed one feature of good government Their very character was tyranny their figure deformity James Madison astute and sagacious as well as patient and conciliatory looked for a formula that would allow the new Republic to be democratic in substance without being called so in name In a democracy" he pleaded the people meet and exercise their government in person in a republic they assemble and administer it by their representatives and agents A democracy consequently will be confined to a small spot A

course he should have been The Nazi dictatorship was fascist If a communist dictator otherwise Marxist breaks with the Kremlin he too is labeled fascist But the Soviet system with its slave camps *terrorism thought control* and *every other attribute* of obvious despotism is always somehow democratic

The extraordinary thing is that so many in the West have been deluded by this monstrous claim Such is the confusion the uncertainty the ambiguity *that definitions of democracy must still contend with Yet except in its gravity the situation is* not new In this respect the prevailing opinion is far astray Democracy was never easy to define From the time the word was first used in ancient Athens its meaning has been controversial

When Plato attacked democracy and Aristotle belittled it they were not complaining of the way of *life described in the Funeral Oration of Pericles* They were making their own definitions It was much the same many centuries later in the conflict of opinion between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams Most of the American Founding Fathers

nitions could be bettered defined democracy as "a government *of* all the people *by* all the people *for* all the people and in 1863 Lincoln shortened this to government of the people by the people for the people achieving no doubt, the classical and final form

Yet it is not a complete definition as Lincoln would have been the first to insist For democracy is something more than government Like liberty and equality—words which Lincoln complained had never been properly defined—democracy has larger meanings than a single definition can convey And that should be our starting point. Words that are baffling to define are seldom words of small meanings Freedom justice wisdom goodness spirit beauty life and love—these also have baffled their definers

We should not be ashamed therefore that democracy is a difficult thing to put into words Difficulty of this sort is a measure not of vagueness but of largeness Moreover the meaning of democracy was never static it has grown with the centuries The earlier definitions are insufficient for that very

republic may be extended over a large region" Which perhaps was only partly sophistry since something of the sort was needed to change the basis of the far too narrow current definitions

The briefest modern definition of democracy may very well have been the one proposed by Thomas Cooper in 1795 Government of the people and for the people But under this definition as we have already seen a tyrant can proclaim his government democratic a possibility which apparently did not escape the notice of Daniel Webster who revised the definition in a speech in the Senate in 1830 so that it went The people s government made for the people made by the people and answerable to the people Somewhat earlier than this in a Supreme Court opinion handed down in 1819 Chief Justice John Marshall had declared that the United States government is emphatically and truly a government of the people In form and in substance it emanates from them its powers are granted by them and are to be exercised directly on them and for their benefit In 1850 the Unitarian preacher Theodore Parker believing that these previous defi

was with despairing Europeans—and still is with many of them and that is how it is in the Far East There is not much room for communism where democracy has had a genuine chance It is because the Kremlin knows this that resort is had to force

Yet, in spite of the perils of the military outlook—perhaps in part because of them—democracy has never had a wider opportunity As a *faith* as a *way of life* and as a *universal purpose* it is more persuasive now than ever But democracy must be defined—and in the context of our actual situation. We must know in a way that can be spelled out exactly what its meaning is for modern men

It is not my thought—and this I hope is obvious—that this little volume will achieve that aim I am willing to fall far short of the mark if through attempting it I can get a little closer than I have before That is what we must all do try to get it clearer in our understanding what it is that we are determined to accomplish by withstanding the Communists Deep in our hearts we already know for we know how intolerable it would be to be de

reason as they also are because with startling suddenness we have come to a crisis in democratic development It is because of this crisis that we must strain ourselves to new perceptions The crisis is itself the context of our clearer definitions

This last assertion is the basis upon which the following pages have been written Democracy should define itself on paper as it must in life i e in terms of the struggle in which we are engaged In the opinion of the writer communism *as a belief and voluntary social purpose* is already declining It has had to take to military aggression In Czechoslovakia for instance it could not have prevailed except through forcible seizure of the government Even in the Far East it succeeds only because democracy has not produced a tangible alternative And it succeeds *in the name of democracy!* That is what we must evaluate and plainly understand To the penniless even a debased currency is better than none at all They do not choose it because they prefer it they accept it because it is the only kind they have found a way to possess That is how it

Democracy as a Faith

feated But our faith and purposes must be made clearer We must try again and again to define them If we speak sincerely we cannot fail in the end to speak plainly and when we speak plainly the world will be eager to hear us

One of our handicaps in the present struggle—so we are told—is that the Communists know what they believe whereas we do not This is not as true as it seems Basically communism is not a belief but a disbelief It assumes that life is ultimately without meaning Nothing moves through history that has a final value All is a play of forces moving first this way then that The individual has no worth except as a unit within a collectivized totality What is best, therefore is not the creative interplay of individual lives freely adventurous each seeking to lift itself to greater measures of achievement but the adjustment of individuals to social conformity To this end they must be made to think alike behave as anticipated take whatever part is chosen for them in a stable sterile and completely crystallized society

As opposed to this the believer in democracy at least assumes the worth of individual lives What

but in the end resign himself to fate ("historical determinism) He must subdue what other living things he could to feed and clothe himself and his fellow men were all his rivals in the struggle for existence he must fight them down—he and his kin folk banded together the better to compete With the coming of civilization—the earlier civilizations —this attitude was only partly modified To have a civilization at all its system had to be despotic That was how it achieved form and order and defended itself against enemies without and anarchy within (Which is what is claimed for communist dictator ship) Heresy was a threat to the general welfare the orthodoxy of the ruling caste was in the public interest (dictatorship of the proletariat) It was useless to rebel This too was the way of the world inevitable unalterable decreed by fate

Then it began to happen just here and there first in this century then in that that a few people were bold enough to question whether man was bound to be the slave of destiny Increasing knowledge might unfetter him Nature was not hostile to intelligence nor yet to change As for man made barriers the

ever his confusions he rejects the thought that nothing better can be done with him than prepare him for life in an anthill He may not be sure where history is going but he wants to help in deciding it He believes that life is creative that is why he wants to be free because he sees that freedom is essential to creation

It is not true therefore that communist belief is clearer than democratic belief What *is* clearer is communist disbelief And this comes about not through *solving* the problem of man s place in the scheme of things but from giving up the attempt to solve it The only thing that Communists are clearer about than we are is the communist purpose in relation to democratic society—which is to destroy it

And this brings us to our starting point for democracy as a faith For most of the period of man s life on the earth he has lived in fear and disbelief his opinion of himself being essentially that of the Marxist What happened to him was unimportant and beyond his power to influence as best he could he would placate the gods and demons (or in Marxist terms go along with the dialectical process")

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goodness And so from this prophetic movement beginning in the eighth century B C the religion grew that produced what is called the Judeo Christian tradition It had of course its counterparts in other places but none of them has matched its vigor or been granted equal influence in molding history For the first time it brought to multitudes the faith that man can choose to raise the level of his own life that his world could be made good that progress is possible that a social order can be made beneficent through justice and righteousness sympathy and love

Meanwhile in another small country events were taking place of equal import With a power and adventurousness never before believed possible men were learning to think and they discovered that there were laws of the mind If thinking was diligent and disciplined and superstition and prejudice were excluded if above all the mind were set free to make and test its own discoveries then life and nature would yield up their secrets And thus in Athens man discovered reason One of its most immediate results was rebellion against tyranny

power to put them up could also be the power to tear them down Tyranny might be subdued by law One could imagine liberty

And so there began to be hope But that was all it was—just hope fitful transitory intermittent Nothing was changed The multitude remained obedient to its masters Slaves built the pyramids to be the tombs of kings Religions came and went—sometimes with noble aspirations but ending always with surrender religions of resignation masking the *gauntness of despair*

Until in one place—Judea—there came to be a religion that challenged fatalism with decisive courage and conviction a religion that persuaded men that if they were willing to recognize the laws of life and history they could gain power over their own destiny These laws were moral laws requiring justice and righteousness in all human relationships and equity and benevolence as the aims of a society Oppression would be penalized So would the exploitation of the poor All men were equal in their right to justice and justice was what the God of history required Not sacrifices not ritual—but

they were too impatient and embittered to see that what they were proposing would destroy democracy rather than amend it And so they persisted as Lenin did half a century later using liberty to undermine liberty and reason to unseat reason so that while believing that they were going ahead with the democratic revolution they actually produced a counterrevolution

It never occurred to Marx of course that communism would come first to Russia and be united with a long tradition of cruel and despotic government He had thought of it only in terms of a society highly developed both politically and industrially and not at all as applying to retarded areas which had not participated in the democratic revolution As a matter of fact as a newspaper correspondent in the Crimean War he had nothing but contempt for Russia which is evidence no doubt of prejudice Perhaps it is generosity on the part of the Soviet government that keeps his views on Russia from ever being featured in *I vestia* or *Pravda*

It must be noted however that Marx also wrote at a moment when the democratic faith was facing

The free mind needed the free man and moreover servitude diminished moral stature thus limiting the possibility of growth which was repugnant to the mind—irrational It was therefore declared that men would be governed under laws that they themselves would make And so came freedom and its counterpart democracy It was a short lived experiment but its influence was immortal Presently in the Christian centuries the religion that grew up in Judea and the freedom that flourished in Athens were mingled together in a gathering faith and purpose which in spite of interruptions and restraints issued at last in the Renaissance and the revolutions of the eighteenth century

The true significance of this immense transition has not as yet been measured It was so great that the nineteenth century became alarmed at it and decided apparently not to proceed so rapidly It was this that gave to communism its initial opportunity Evils that previously would have been accepted as inevitable became intolerable by democratic standards Marx and Engels saw these evils and proposed to cure them by a drastic remedy But

been more thoroughly absorbed into Russia creating the same belief the same hope the same purpose that it did in America and Europe in the eighteenth century After all, Russia had not been standing still Tolstoy was a world figure long before Lenin.

Instead of that the Russia that had turned its face toward the West and was struggling painfully and gropingly toward democracy was taken captive by the Marxists This was done very largely in the name of democracy It had to be like many other things the Soviet state has done It was democracy the Russian people wanted It was tyranny however to which they were accustomed So the newer aspiration gave way before the ancient disbelief and fear the surrender to fate the renunciation of a democratic destiny All the old evils came back, as they did in a variant form in Nazi Germany in a new disguise An industrial society denies it in its show of energy and in appearance but actually it is the same old fatalism the same despotism the same servitude that had held humanity within its icy grip for countless centuries

a dilemma The *science* that *democracy* had encouraged to move ahead in intellectual freedom was at that time dogmatically *materialist* and Darwinism was being interpreted as a sort of sanction for capitalism to adopt the laws of the jungle This dilemma was transitional and the conclusions of science were later greatly modified materialism determinism Darwinism all were reinterpreted But when Marx was writing it looked as though the democratic faith in reason was resulting in democracy being undermined by reason and as if determinism materialism and atheism were restoring the fatalistic disbelief which democracy had challenged If the democratic faith had not faltered—both as a faith and in its applications—Marx and Engels would soon have been forgotten men

But then if the democratic faith had never faltered there would have been no First World War to shatter European stability and thus no Marxist Russian Revolution Instead there would have been a democratic Russian *revolution* That *is to say* the civilization of the West which was the dominant influence throughout the entire world would have

entists must find only what they are expected to find philosophers must say only what is anticipated Even musicians and artists must not be adventurous inspiration must be constrained to follow channels labeled orthodox Communism therefore no matter how much it claims to be rational and scientific is actually the antithesis of science and rationality Reason is *dis*believed in Democracy sets the mind free communism fears and fetters it That is the first point of contrast

The second is in the struggle between good and evil The democratic faith demands that this shall be an open conflict The good in a democratic society must do battle with evil where all can see it and the one will be distinguished from the other through watching the contest Communism on the other hand makes up its mind in secret It thereupon imposes what the despot has decided and whatever questions this decision is looked upon as evil

Thus the communist citizen not only loses his right to think freely he is deprived of his morality If his conscience reasserts itself he is charged with

Nor is this affected by providing better standards of material life A modern society that renounces the democratic faith goes back to what the world was before the democratic faith was born No matter how industrialized or highly organized it can rise no higher than the Egypt whose slaves put up the pyramids For the democratic faith—that and nothing else—is what has given the world the genuine promise of emancipation without it there is no possibility of being set free from cruelty and oppression or of being saved from servitude and fear

Let us notice the contrast between reliances What is it that the democratic faith relies upon and what is it that the Communists appeal to? First the democratic faith remembering always what the ancient Greeks discovered—that the mind can only grow through freedom—insists upon the open conflict of opinion *Truth that is really truth will vanquish falsehood through discussion and debate* For the democratic faith is a faith in reason But communism says that the mind must be indoctrinated reason may be used but must arrive at foreordained conclusions There must be no deviationism Sci

righted He has tried to get them righted by persuasion But people will not do what he wants He becomes impatient He will *make* them do what he wants They must be *coerced* into doing what is good for them If they are not intelligent enough to see it for themselves they must be managed by those who *are* intelligent.

In the moment that he makes this decision the communist idealist has become a despot—even though a petty one He will now maneuver contrive conspire—not realizing that he is working for a world controlled by despots and conspirators His motive is impatience He has given up believing in reason and persuasion He is ready to use force

But then his motivation need not be as high as this He may have found that freedom lets some other people get ahead of him—sometimes so it seems unjustly Democratic experience is often disappointing and abrasive And so he becomes embittered and resentful He wants a society in which he can lord it over these other people for he is convinced that his kind of person is the sort who should be on top His motive thus becomes hatred. He has

noncompliance and sent to prison or a slave camp where he remains until either he or his conscience is subdued If he submits he is made to confess" that the good his conscience said was good was not good and that he sinned against the state In future the state shall be his conscience In this way as I say he is turned into something that dare not choose for itself something *non moral* The New Testament tells us to fear not those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul" Communism apparently can kill the soul

The democratic faith on the other hand demands that men *develop* souls that each consult his own conscience reflecting upon right and wrong in the light of reason that each achieve decisions that he thinks are right and that all engage in the struggle of good with evil as free members of a free society

Let us turn now to motivation thinking particularly of the comrade" engaged in propaganda and conspiracy What is his motivation? Let us take it at its best He has looked at the world lived in it known some of its people come to the conclusion that a great many things are wrong and ought to be

easier to attack the conscience of the West. For the evils it has mobilized are real Nevertheless not one of them is such an evil—nor all of them together—as the evil of the communist intention We must strip it of pretenses we must show to all the world precisely what it is

But to do that we must know more clearly that there would have been no communism if we had given a truer devotion to our democratic faith We should have moved much faster in extending it, and in applying it to all the evils that have mocked it Let us in summary remind ourselves of what it is

The democratic faith is a belief that man if he resolves upon it can raise the level of his life indefinitely making the world increasingly more happy more just and more good no fate has made him prisoner of his circumstances no natural weakness has condemned him to be ruled by tyranny He is meant to be free Through the power of reason he can form intelligent opinions and by discussion and debate can test them Knowing that truth is precious above all things and the only safe guide to purposes and aims the right to seek it must be held inviolate

no use for a world that has done so little to advance him He rejects it and is glad to turn his hand against it

Now that is what communism depends upon im patience and resentment Its motivation is hatred not sympathy or love The Communist for example who concerns himself with race relations does not love the colored man he just hates the white man In the same way as proved by what has happened when the Communists have seized control there is no love of the poor man only hatred for the rich man As Lenin himself admitted to Bertrand Russell he had greatly enjoyed inciting the poorer peasants against the richer ones Ha ha! he laughed "and they soon hanged them from the nearest tree" Per haps it is not surprising that lesser Communists can be as cruel as their worshipped savior In literal fact communism is mobilizing all the impatience and resentment all the frustration and hatred it can reach That is what communism is the unremedied evils of the world marshaled by hate to bring about the world s destruction

Having no conscience itself it finds it that much

2 Democracy as a Way of Life

And the democratic faith declares that human rights are by their nature universal that liberty is such a right and that without liberty there cannot be justice that to ensure justice the people should make the laws under which they live that besides justice there should be benevolence and sympathy that those doctrines of religion which beseech mankind to practice brotherhood are right that love must expel hate and good will take the place of malice that as well as zeal there must be patience *and forbearance and that persuasion is better than coercion that none should hold the people in con*tempt or profane the sacredness of conscience or deny the worth of human life and finally that God and history are on the side of freedom and justice love and righteousness and man will therefore be it soon or late achieve a world society of peace and happiness where all are free and none shall be afraid

The objection has frequently been raised that in speaking of democracy as a way of life we use a term that is indefinite ambiguous inexplicit. What is a way of life? How accurately can you depict it? What is the basis of your definition—aspirations or performance verbal formulas or day to day behavior? If the democratic way of life includes for instance allegiance to the principle of equal justice does it also include transgressions of this principle as in the unjust practice of race and class discrimination? If it does not, to what extent is democracy a way of life to the people who refuse to live it?

Or again the democratic way of life is based we say upon rule by the majority What is the situation then, if the majority is misinformed and its opinion manipulated causing it to come to false decisions? Is not its true intent frustrated?

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cratic principles The majority for example can decide—undemocratically—to keep a minority disenfranchised as it does in the case of Negro citizens in parts of the United States In other instances it contradicts the democratic faith in reason—as it surely does when a legislative majority decides by vote that there is no truth in the scientific theory of evolution The same majority may also decide to limit democratic freedom of discussion and of information

Such illustrations can be multiplied Which then is the democratic way of life the practice or the principle? Might it not be bett- [illegible] I —to ton- [illegible] see it [illegible] about Unless of course we are willing to adopt its compromises and include them in the definition of a working system

*This is a very plausible approach—but quite mis*leading In the first place democracy *is* in part an aspiration but it is also in part a quite demonstrable achievement The fact that democratic principles are incompletely practiced does not mean that they are not practiced at all They are sufficiently prac

ticed to have produced more justice more equality of opportunity more liberty and more social welfare in the democratic countries than have ever been produced elsewhere since history began and since their practice is increasing in spite of old reluctances and new complexities there is every reason for believing in their further progress in the future

Furthermore between the democratic aspiration and its actual achievements there is always a highly productive state of tension More simply put when we do not live up to our principles we are unhappy about it disturbed by a sense of guilt goaded by conscience This is a constant dynamic driving us on to democratic progress Because of it little by little we increase our justice remedy our evils broaden our equality of opportunity *and still maintain our liberty*—things that have not been done in any country where democracy has been rejected It is clear then that democracy is *not* merely an aspiration but quite substantial in its incomplete achievements

In the second place democracy is not imprisoned in its compromises and we are not required to treat

cratic principles The majority for example can decide—*undemocratically*—*to keep a minority disenfranchised* as it does in the case of Negro citizens in parts of the United States In other instances it contradicts the democratic faith in reason—as it surely does when a legislative majority decides by vote that there is no truth in the scientific theory of evolution The same majority may also decide to limit democratic freedom of discussion and of information

Such illustrations can be multiplied Which then is the democratic way of life the practice or the principle? Might it not be better—we are exhorted—to stop speaking of democracy as a way of life and see it chiefly as an aspiration? Unless of course we are willing to adopt its compromises and include them in the definition of a working system

This is a very plausible approach—but quite misleading In the first place democracy *is* in part an aspiration but it is also in part a quite demonstrable achievement The fact that democratic principles are *incompletely practiced does not mean that they* are not practiced at all They are sufficiently prac

and transitional For a democratic society is always a society in motion one in which at any given moment something is being changed replaced sup planted superseded By necessity therefore there must be inconsistencies that which is passing will be in conflict with that which is emerging develop ing purposes must make their way through changing present facts

Aims moreover that are introduced by some of the people will be resisted by others There will be opposition between those who are persuaded and those who are unpersuaded but it will be a political struggle to be settled in the end by votes and its violence will be mostly oratorical

We must also note that the people in a democratic society are not all equally democratic this is true not only of their practices but even in their loyalty to democratic principles Democracy is never uni formity even in conviction Always there will be debate As Thomas Masaryk once said democracy is discussion and thus an enterprise of mutual edu cation

What else then shall we call democracy if not

it as a system If it is a system at all it is an open system not a closed one Its systematic elements such as parliamentary government independent judiciary constitutional monarchy or federal republicanism are all functional and their purpose is to carry out the will of the people In the sense in which feudalism was a system or the caste system of India democracy is not a system Nor is it a system in the sense in which Soviet communism is a system or fascism or Hitler s system On the contrary it is the antagonist *of systems* It opposes and rejects all social orders which constrain mankind within a settled pattern The democratic society is a fluid society *Its system is open* It provides for the new to be introduced peacefully and to take the place of the old gradually In the case of closed systems important changes can only be injected violently through revolutions which destroy the system

It is tremendously important to realize this because when *we do there is no remaining difficulty* in understanding the contradictions of a democratic society All of them are temporary intermediate

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are the indications of vitality an evidence of growth The opportunity to grow to develop to rise in the scale of human values—that is precisely what the democratic way of life has brought about Both for the individual and for society growth is the law of life It is for that reason as we have already seen that democracy is not just a political method or one among others of the forms society may take It goes much deeper It is the necessary social condition as Walt Whitman so clearly saw for cultural progress it is indispensable to man s advance to spiritual ma turity This last is a fact that merits heavier empha sis

More than all others the democratic way of life is strenuous and difficult This is so much the case that many have been willing to give it up not wait ing to have it taken away from them they have sur rendered it voluntarily Let us recall the ways—or some of them—in which it is difficult

First, it is difficult because it makes us free men and women requiring us to form independent judg ments and to accept the responsibility for our own lives This means that we have to be more self reli

a way of life? That is exactly what it is It cannot be defined as a system because in the usual meaning of the term it is *not* a system Its systematic aspects take the form required to serve its inner purpose As the purpose grows the form may change For the people do not serve the forms the forms serve the people

Now there are those who complain of this fluidity because they do not see its true significance Democracies they say are inefficient and disorderly Dictators can act with greater resolution and dispatch Moreover in authoritarian systems the people are kept in order and restrained So they are but at what cost? At a cost unhappily no longer theoretical not only have we seen it paid by others we have paid a part of it ourselves to put an end to dictatorial efficiency in Nazi Germany And now we are seeing the price of Soviet dictatorship—in enslavement and terrorism debasement and degradation! Once more we must pay our share in blood and treasure to put a limit to it

Whatever the restlessness the social conflicts and the inner tensions of the democratic way of life they

—but spiritual It is largely for this reason that so many people otherwise intelligent and more than usually sensitive are vulnerable to communism They cannot break with the ancient pattern They want to be told what to think and what to do They want a father image once again and find it in the Kremlin That is why the numerous and enormous portraits of Dictator Stalin are so much displayed in countries under his authority The purpose is emotional and spiritual the end in view surrender of the soul The Communist has found a father to relieve him of his freedom to tell him what to think and say and do The democratic way of life was too hard for him it defeated him spiritually He was not willing to be free

Second the democratic way of life is difficult because it is based upon equality It does not insist—as superficial critics say it does—upon everyone being equal in ability equal in merit equal in integrity And that is precisely the point What democracy demands is that no one be treated the worse because he is less endowed than others with capacity—or for that matter with wealth or fortune or any ad

ant more mature than we find easy For thousands of years human societies have based themselves upon authority In primitive times the individual was told what to do by the chieftain the priest or the patriarch and his conduct was closely pre scribed by custom This same pattern in varying degrees adapted and elaborated persisted into the civilizations of history In addition as the clinical psychologists have shown us deep impressions re sulted from the family being ruled by the father Independence was not encouraged The individual was told—and was willing to be told—what to be lieve what to speak what to do The father image in one variant or another was always dominant On earth it occupied the altar and the throne above the earth its image was projected in the sky

Now freedom means the dismissal of this image and the rejection of its authority The individual must assert his independence rely upon his own judgment develop his own conscience learn to go alone How hard this often is has been described for us repeatedly by the psychiatrists The difficulty of being free is not political—not that in the first place

new ones Even food is allotted in the Soviet Union on the basis of political eminence social station and economic status and this is none the less discrimination because the former social grades have been inverted All aristocracies go back to seizures of power and privilege through which an earlier group was dispossessed

To return however to the problems of equality in a democratic society quite clearly all men are not equal in the responsibilities they carry There is no way of running a ship with every member of the crew a captain. Nor of building a house with workmen each of whom insists on being the architect Yet, when the ship captain rides on a train his responsibility is transferred to the engineer and when an architect has an appendectomy the important person is the surgeon Even the President of the United States is inferior in status to his cook if he ventures to assist in the kitchen

Yet, there is such a thing as leadership and democracy at its present imperfect stage is often unable to recognize what leadership involves President Truman in an extemporaneous address (in January

vantage whatever. On the contrary, the less fortunate person should be given fuller consideration. At the very least he must be treated as the equal of all others *in his civil rights*, but in addition his individuality must be respected; he must be given a chance to overcome his handicaps and develop his innate capacity; he must not be disdained or pushed aside; *his natural rights are equal to the rights of others*.

This is one of the hardest principles to practice that has ever been proposed. It is so manifest that some people are wiser than others, more diligent, more purposeful, more useful—more almost everything that moves them toward advancement—that it seems natural to yield them some preferment. Indeed, at the present stage in democratic progress there is no way of avoiding it. But the democratic way of life insists nevertheless upon the aim and purpose of equality—and whatever falls short of it is disesteemed and counted less than the best. The Soviet society, as a number of acute observers have recently pointed out, is moving in the opposite direction. While democratic society is breaking down barriers of rank and class, the Kremlin is erecting

that each has human dignity and value in the life of the society

And here once again there are those who have found equality (except as a "leveling down" to be applied to other people) too difficult to attempt—or having attempted it, they have given up Not all who have done this are Communists but it is certainly a communist characteristic Indeed it is the essence of the communist motivation namely impatience and resentment, which causes the principle of equality to be surrendered to the urge to dominate This is done not openly but treacherously using the word equality itself as a means of enslavement. Debate is exchanged for conspiracy persuasion for coercion, equal freedom for equal servitude equal rights for equal degradation It is not because democracy is *decadent* but because it is *difficult* that so many turn to communism

The third reason that the democratic way of life is difficult is because it is reasonable It is not easy to be reasonable Not only does it involve the restraint of emotion and the expulsion of bias and

1951) remarked that it was perfectly proper to elect leaders and then abuse them Perhaps it is In any case it was a tactful thing for a President who had suffered some abuse himself to seek an opportunity to say Nevertheless one of the most necessary adjustments democracies must make is in the building up of leadership Equality must not be turned into an impediment to good government or become a disguise for mediocrity or a disparagement of excellence Only the best should be chosen leaders and they should be given whatever privileges are in the public interest while engaged in performing their tasks They should also be esteemed for their achievements Would democracy be made more equal if no one reverenced Lincoln? Or if Jefferson were less reputed in his countrymen s esteem?

None of this must be held to mean however that the democratic way of life can afford to whittle down the aim and purpose of equality It is this aim that fosters individual growth making each man and woman aware that his or her opinion counts that no one is an underling or a "cog in a machine

munist authority s chief concern would always be its own security to encourage reason was too great a risk They hoped that tyranny could be benevolent they awakened to find that tyrannies are always run by tyrants And so they return—some of them—to the difficult way of life they had forsaken seeing at last that its very difficulty is the earnest of its promise An easy way is always a retreat To go forward one must take the way that is hard

And that is what democracy is a hard way not an easy one It takes courage to be free to be self reliant to believe in equal rights and opportunities to trust to reason and persuasion And thus the democratic way is difficult

But it is also the only possible way if humanity is to have a future Every other way of life leads back —and regression in the modern world can only mean destruction Only a society of mature minded men and women can solve the problems of the present age What chance can there be of such a society being developed except through democracy? The alternative to democracy is therefore dissolution and this will be so as I shall show in the pages fol

require such things as the subordination of selfish aims to the public interest but it demands great pa tience There will be disappointments defeats com promises to be faced—all worked out in the spirit of moderation and the light of reason

Nothing is easier than to become impatient and seek a quicker way But alas! the quicker way re verses the direction The end in view is destroyed—destroyed by the means employed That is what the communist idealist has had to learn—and many of them have learned it in pain and bitterness What they thought was a quicker way to the better world they longed for turned out to be the way to a world they came to loathe and hate They thought conspiracy was a quick way to democracy and found that it led only to permanent conspiracy They thought hate could be used to turn out evil and es tablish good but they discovered that it only made evil more hateful and banished the hope of good They believed that communist authority was the ally of science and determined to l

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lowing even if we concede to the Communists all they want Only a democratic society can open the path to the future The difficult way is the only possible way—unless we are willing that there be no future

If this be so however we need not fear the difficulty It should exhilarate and inspire us It is our destiny—if we will but choose it—that democracy shall lead the world to freedom justice peace and ultimate security This is the world s one hope that in the gathering dark still glimmers with the light of promise and in the turning of this hope to faith and purpose we can find once more a growing confidence and widening opportunity

3 Democracy as a Universal Purpose

Ideas never stand still Either they grow in influence or waste away As Mr Justice Holmes once put it every idea is an incitement it offers itself for belief and if believed it is acted upon unless some other belief outweighs it or some failure of energy stifles the movement at its birth

That is what the idea of liberty has been an incitement to be free Not only Europe and the Americas but the entire world has felt the force of this incitement The same is true of the idea of equality which in spite of the difficulty of defining it has inspired millions both east and west with the hope of equal opportunity Taken together these two ideas encourage still a third one *democracy* which as we have seen means not only that government should be *of by* and *for* the people but that every individual is of infinite worth and that co-operating together free individuals can form societies unlim

Dis ent Opi ion Benjami Gitlow v P ple of the State of New York, 268 U.S 6.., 19.5

ited in possibility Authoritarian societies not only impose political and economic servitude they bar the gateways of the future It was democracy that inspired the faith that man can be the master of his fate democracy that set him free from false beliefs that the gods had doomed him to be powerless in the face of circumstance and incapable of being governed by any other rule than tyranny

In the western nations with a culture stemming from Judea and Athens the democratic idea became a definite belief in the eighteenth century It produced the American and French revolutions and brought immense reforms to other countries Then it began to lose velocity It applied itself too slowly and too weakly to economic conditions It took too long to put an end to slavery It failed to establish racial equality It permitted imperialism It was feeble in resisting exploitation of retarded peoples Its principle that "all men are created equal was not fully worked out and the doctrine of the survival of the fittest" largely supplanted it As an incitement " it suffered what Mr Justice Holmes referred to as "a failure of energy" it slowed down in the

West precisely when it was inducing a revolutionary ferment in the East And it was not adopted as a universal faith and purpose It therefore became possible for some other belief" to "outweigh it which is what has recently been threatening this other belief being communism

If the democratic world had understood that a transforming idea cannot be made to stand still that it must either advance or retreat take in new territory or yield to a more vigorous contender there would have been no room for communism It cannot be too greatly emphasized that from the hour of its emergence democracy began to be *throughout the world* an invitation to new ways of life a revolutionary influence a provocation and incitement What had been done in one place could be done in others Democracy has introduced not merely hope but expectation When what was expected failed to take place a condition arose that was ripe for exploitation The Communists understood this and have made the most of their advantage Where democracy held back communism has plunged forward And be it noted *in the name of democracy* propos

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things by now our cause would have been lost Most of Europe in addition to all of Asia would have been communist

That we could do the things we have is ground for confidence Nothing of this magnitude has been attempted since history began Yet, we need more than this We need a democratic purpose as large as fully spelled out as realistic and as energetic as the communist purpose We must say for instance exactly what we mean by freedom from want" It is not just a matter of giving away part of what we grow in America it is a matter of increasing production in the critical areas upon the basis of plans as practical as those of the Communists but with the vital difference that freedom from want shall carry with it all the other freedoms Wherever the standard of living rises communism retreats Very few people want to be communized if they can be free and also have enough to eat. If we will allow ourselves to understand this we can develop a weapon far more potent than the atom bomb and one which the Kremlin cannot duplicate We can help people to be free from hunger *and free from tyranny as well!* This is the incitement needed to restore their

ing reforms and pre empting areas that democracy has neglected

Nor is there any doubt that the communist aim is universal What the democratic countries failed to see namely that by the beginning of the twentieth century the world had been converted into a single vast society united by the Industrial Revolution and the technological changes that were following it the Communists perceived immediately and laid their plans accordingly The world had to be organized—all of it—and the Communists proposed to do it by dictatorship They called it the dictatorship of the proletariat Yet in the United States even after two world wars it is only dimly recognized that the internationalism of communism will have to be matched and surpassed item by item by the internationalism of democracy

It is true that we have supported the United Nations and tried to make it democratic in certain of its aims and purposes it is true that we have succeeded in framing a Universal Declaration of Human Rights it is also true that we have engaged in programs of relief and have created agencies of economic rehabilitation If we had not done these

not conspiracy and freedom of information not iron curtains—can achieve dependable agreements disarmament and the structure of a genuine peace It is therefore indispensable not merely optional that democracy shall become a universal purpose

But there is still another reason for adopting this conclusion—a very rigorous and harsh one that allows of no alternatives Let us ask ourselves what the intention of the Kremlin is toward the United States There is no possibility whatever of the United States becoming communist Indeed if there were the Kremlin would be alarmed A communist United States would be too powerful a rival and might take away supremacy from Russia But as I say there is no possibility of it and the Kremlin knows it We have no multitude of landless peasants famine ridden and mutinous we have no restless and rebellious proletariat In short, whatever our deficiencies they are not such as communism can exploit to produce a revolution They can be exploited only far enough to provide the Kremlin with spies and saboteurs propagandists and subversives

This places us in a very interesting situation We

faith in democracy and bring about a communist defeat

As for the other freedoms it is obvious that only democracy supplies them This is true also of freedom from the fear of war There are those who suppose that communist dominion if it were unchallenged would at least produce peace Such a hope is quite delusive The same causes that set Stalin against Trotsky and have now set him against Tito and that have been responsible for purges and political assassinations would continue to operate It would be impossible for the Kremlin to keep as tight a grip on the entire world as it does on Russia and its present satellites and thus there would be an age of ruthlessly competing factions each with its own dictator endlessly conspiring and when it served their purpose making war upon each other Necessarily the most decisive weapons would be used such as nerve gas disease germs and atomic explosives No system composed as the Kremlin system is can bring the possibility of peace Only democracy—international democracy with an open system not a closed one and based upon discussion

ment with some reluctance as in the case of starving the millions of Ukrainian peasants in the nineteen twenties or the present working to death of the millions in the slave camps But the end would be held to justify the means Anything whatever is counted appropriate if it serves the cause of communist advancement The destruction of democracies through decimation of their populations and demolition of their industries would certainly be thought appropriate With this done survivors could be moved to other countries no doubt to work in slave camps and their lands assigned to Soviet Eurasians that the Kremlin could (it hopes) control Plainly therefore the United States will never know security again until the power of the Kremlin has been broken nor most probably will any of the other democracies But how is this to come about? The answer is that it can only come about when enough of the world both East and West is democratic

Until this happens the United States must be a nation in arms moving from one urgency to another And if the crisis lasts too long the question arises as to how much we can keep of our own democracy There is no alternative for the United States and

cannot be made part of the Soviet system and yet if we are outside it we threaten it by our very existence As long as the United States continues to be productive and powerful the Kremlin will be anxious and its victories insecure If part of the Soviet empire revolts the United States may assist that part just as we are thinking of doing in the case of Yugoslavia We may invent some quite conclusive weapon and surprise the Kremlin with it In any case we remain a symbol of hope to the multitudes the Soviet has coerced into servitude

Since therefore we cannot be drawn within the Soviet system and yet are unbearably dangerous by remaining outside it there can be only one intention the Kremlin has for the United States complete destruction This must also be the case with any other democracy which cannot be absorbed and communized Only with the powerful democracies destroyed can the rest of the world be organized for communism Therefore as long as the Kremlin holds to its purpose of world dominion these democracies and especially the United States are threatened with extinction

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Until this happens the United States must be a nation in arms moving from one urgency to another And if the crisis lasts too long the question arises as to how much we can keep of our own democracy There is no alternative for the United States and

its democratic allies to survive, the democratic way of life must be extended—and without delay. This does not mean that Western institutions must be uniform, or that the East must duplicate them. Democracy is an open system, not a closed one, and its patterns can be versatile. What is necessary is that democratic principles defeat dictatorship not merely in debate or by resort to arms but through their application and embodiment. Until democracy is ascendant in the rest of the world it cannot be made secure—and neither can anything else—within the present democracies.

It is extremely critical that we understand this situation and begin to act upon it. The United States must know, as Lincoln did, that democracy has always been a purpose destined to be universal. He must save the Union, Lincoln said, not for itself alone but to keep alive the principle it lives by, for man's vast future. What was then the future is now the present. The hour is late and many opportunities have slipped away. And yet there is still time if we are willing to delay no longer and begin to use it. Let us then shape our plans to meet realities and make democracy the master of its destiny.